



Inside ACA — July 2007

A Message from the President

A few weeks ago, I heard an Ira Glass piece on public radio, where he said "People who love camp say that noncamp people simply don't understand what's so amazing about camp." Mr. Glass was absolutely right. And this is the time of year when those of us in the camp profession realize all the amazing things about camp.

Each summer, over eleven million adults and children participate in the estimated 12,000 camps in the United States. Unfortunately, that means that an additional forty million children and youth are "noncamp people," who do not understand the value of camp like we do. They don't get to experience the renewal that we feel from spending a summer at camp, the closeness to nature, and the joy of sharing good times with friends, both old and new. We are indeed the lucky ones, because we have found that camp isn't just about activities, but about life, how we relate to each other, and making friends that last a lifetime.

The public's interest in camp peaks during the summer, and the American Camp Association (ACA) has become the source of information about camp. Our Web site is visited thousands of times a day, hundreds of thousands of people read stories about camp in newspapers and magazines, and many more see or hear camp news on television and radio. In addition, ACA is partnering with Sony/Tristar Pictures to provide Web copy for a resource page on their "Daddy Day Camp" Web site. Camp will be in the news this summer and at the box office! Tristar Pictures has provided a select group of ACA-accredited camps with activity books filled with fun projects and activities specifically designed for campers between the ages of six to ten.

With most of ACA's accredited camps in session during the summer, hundreds of volunteers in the standards program are visiting camps as a part of the accreditation process. All of us appreciate the dedication of these volunteers, most of whom are taking precious time away from their own operations to participate as visitors.

In addition, ACA board members and volunteers continue their work on behalf of the organization in sections and at the national level, advancing our profession, establishing collaborations, and preparing for training and other events scheduled for the remainder of the year. And all of this occurs, of course, because we camp people know how amazing this experience is, and we want it to continue to improve and to reach more of those "noncamp" people.

Best wishes for the best time of the year, sharing special moments with camp people, and introducing your new campers to the joy of camp.

Current Research News

Teens Changing Attitudes About Personal Responsibility

How many of you have been following Paris Hilton's latest story of jail time and repentance? The June 15, 2007, issue of *TruView* reflects on the teen generation's changing attitudes and opinions surrounding making a mistake and personal responsibility. How much remorse does a public figure have to show? Parents of the current generation of teens watched non-stop coverage of Watergate (and the eventual resignation of Richard Nixon as he stepped into the doorway of Air Force One). What if that situation occurred today? Would a public statement of "I'm sorry" shared with Barbara Walters in primetime television sit well with today's teens?

It seems that teens subscribe to TRU's theme of "ReGeneration" where controversy and scandal are forgiven with a simple penance. To raise a question—How does this attitude toward making mistakes (often through poor judgment) show up in our camp environment? Do our older campers and younger staff exhibit accountability for their gaffes? How do we model personal responsibility?

Check out ACA's new column, "Teens Today," premiering in *Camping Magazine* in September/October 2007 issue to learn more about your teen campers and staff.

Source: TRU Teen Newsletter, *TRUView*.

Creating Positive Youth Outcomes Workbook Available Now!

Thinking about how to evaluate the outcomes of your program? Need some help? Go to to learn about the new ACA workbook, [Creating Positive Youth Outcomes](#) that helps you and your staff develop a process to identify and measure outcomes. Also on this Web site is a link to the ACA Camper Outcomes Questionnaires. These age-specific versions of short easy-to-administer surveys are available [free to any ACA member](#). Check it out today to give yourself reliable tools that will help you "tell your story" with solid evidence tomorrow!!

Learning Resources

Mark Your Calendars for the 2008 American Camp Association National Conference!

Join a nationwide network of camp professionals and others furthering youth development in Nashville, Tennessee, for the 2008 American Camp Association National Conference. Mark February 12-15, 2008, on your calendar.

The benefits of camp are far reaching, however; we often struggle to communicate the value to those outside the experience. Our conference theme, "The Strength of Many Voices," offers us a platform to explore ways to share what we know, with new and expanded audiences, in a compelling way. Programs, offered in a variety of learning formats, will address:

Youth Development and Behavior – Preparing young people, through the camp experience, for healthy, successful, and meaningful lives. Topics may include: exploring participant development and behavior in the areas of health and wellness, bullying, etc.; program design; and other ways to build on the joy of camp and link activities to desired outcomes.

Staff Training and Leadership – In addition to critical areas in human resources like skillfully recruiting, selecting, managing, training, and motivating staff and volunteers, we'll address goal setting, leadership, outcomes attainment, youth involvement in decision making, and developing life skills on the job. Sessions that address staff health and wellness will be highlighted.

Business and Operations – Learn about successful fundraising strategies, best practices in finance, risk management issues, strategic planning, site and facility management, marketing innovations, environmental issues, food service, transportation, technology solutions, and public policy.

Emerging Issues, Tools, and Strategies – We'll devote significant program time to the Just-in-Time learning needs, their potential solutions, and the innovations that our audience provides through highly participatory sessions. Some sessions will explore the adaptability of solutions provided by related organizations to the camp community.

Innovative Programs and Activities – Sessions in this area will highlight some of the creative and emerging programs that camps offer. You'll take home some terrific ideas to add or modify your already successful program design.

First-Time Attendees — Making it the First ACA National Conference of Many

We encourage first-time attendees to register and fully participate in all the conference has to offer. And, we're willing to help. A special session devoted to our first timers is scheduled right as the conference is about to begin, on Tuesday, February 12. You won't be alone . . . we enjoy a healthy newcomer group annually—roughly two hundred new participants each year. Our goal is two-fold. We want you to feel like you've immediately expanded your professional network. Additionally, we want this to be a learning opportunity you to enjoy, year after year.

Camp Experts in Print

You don't have to wait until the conference to browse the bookstore. Many of our presenters make their works available through the ACA Bookstore, offered through our exclusive publisher, Healthy Learning. If you prefer to thumb through before you buy, we've got you covered. An extensive bookstore, located in the Gaylord Opryland Hotel, will offer exciting new titles, time treasured favorites, training DVDs, workbooks, CDs, and other must-haves for camp.

[ACA Exhibit Hall](#) — Learn, buy, eat, chat, see state-of-the-art industry products, order, make new contacts, and catch up with your long-time suppliers.

[The Gaylord Opryland Hotel](#) — A destination unto itself, the Gaylord Opryland Hotel features a vast array of entertainment, dining, shopping, and recreation options, all under one roof—nine indoor acres in fact! The resort complex includes a championship golf course and a paddle wheel driven floating restaurant and entertainment venue. Recent sleeping room renovations provide elegant accommodations at a value. Opry Mills shopping is just steps away, and provides dining options for every budget. Sleeping room rates are \$160 single or double.

[Get to Know Nashville!](#) We hope your schedule allows for some time to really get to know Nashville, through its many interesting sites, tastes and venues. Visit the Ryman Auditorium, for an historic and authentic taste of the music Nashville is known for best. Experience the music at real honkytonks, and sample some of the South's most loved barbeque, right downtown. Can't wait until spring to golf? We've got you covered. You can golf just minutes from the Gaylord Opryland Resort.

The Voices of Students – Join Us!

We're stronger as a community of camp professionals when we actively seek the participation of students. Full-time students holding ACA memberships may register for the national conference at no charge. This is the ACA way of saying, we want you here, and there's a place for you when your formal studies end.

[Student Membership](#) in ACA offers lifelong learning benefits.

Association News

ACA Provides Camp Resources for Tristar Pictures New Film DADDY DAY CAMP

ACA will be featured as "the" online resource for campers and their parents visiting the Web site for Tristar Pictures new film *DADDY DAY CAMP* scheduled for release in theaters August 8. Visit www.sony.com/daddydaycamp for more information about the movie and view ACA's resource page. This ACA resource will be live on the *Daddy Day Camp* site shortly.



Tristar Pictures has provided select ACA-Accredited Camps® with activity books filled with fun projects and activities specifically designed for campers between the ages of six to ten.

ACA Knowledge Center Offers Resources on Communicable Diseases

Under the topic of Health and Wellness on the online ACA Knowledge Center you can find ACA-published articles, links to the Centers for Disease Control, health and human services organizations, and world health organizations. Visit www.ACAcamps.org/knowledge/health.

Children and Nature Belong Together: A New Addition to ACA's Web site

ACA is pleased to announce the unveiling of [Children and Nature Belong Together](#), a new addition to ACA's parent Web site. This site is part of ACA's commitment to promote children's awareness of nature and features an article by Richard Louv, along with Web and print resources related to children and nature. In addition, ACA is featuring [new professional development pages](#) showcasing how camps can "go green," along with numerous nature education resources on the members-only section of the ACA Web site, and an opportunity to Take the Nature Pledge!



Sign up for CAMP e-News!

CAMP e-News is a helpful and informative education tool that you can offer your camper families and prospects. If you wish to continue to receive this parent newsletter, [please sign up](#).



ACA Welcomes New Funds Development Specialist

Gillian Frazier joined the national staff in June as a funds development specialist. Gillian recently graduated from Indiana University, where she received a master's in public affairs, with concentrations in nonprofit management and policy analysis. Gillian is no stranger to ACA. She worked as the public policy/funds development intern in the summer of 2006 and partnered with national staff again in the fall of 2006 as a funds development intern while enrolled in a fund-raising service learning course. While an undergraduate, she worked for two years as a camp counselor and two years as a program director for a special needs camp in Northwest Indiana. As a funds development specialist, Gillian will work closely with

staff and volunteers on the new ACA Annual Fund and other fund-raising projects. She is thrilled to have an occupation which allows her to share her passion for the camp experience with others!

Melany Irvin Joins the Education Team

Melany Irvin, a member of the ACA national staff, has accepted a new position as education associate. Melany left her position as accounting/administrative associate to join the education team on July 2.

July/August 2007 Issue of Camping Magazine Available Online

The new [July/August 2007 issue](#) of *Camping Magazine* features a unique blend of stories illustrating how the camp profession and the camp experience make a difference in the lives of children and youth. [Access the issue online.](#)

Online Centennial Tribute for Camps

Is your camp one hundred years old? Celebrate your camp's one hundred-year anniversary with ACA's Web-based tribute to member camps. Your camp's centennial story can be shared with thousands of Web visitors every day. [Complete the Historical Profile form.](#) ACA will proudly add your camp's story to the running tribute of outstanding camps that have reached the centennial milestone.

Relevant Issues

ACA, Texoma Update on Flooding Consequences to Camps in the Region

Danielle Shaw, executive director of ACA, Texoma, reports camps in the area are not experiencing any threats to camper safety as a result of the flooding. The issues camps are dealing with currently are related to potential damage to buildings and structures because of the volume of rain fall.

According to Shaw, camps are managing the issues with rain and flooding well, especially camps near rivers and lake areas. "They are well prepared and have experience in dealing with these conditions. They have incredible systems in place, good risk management plans, and have experienced, well-trained staff," says

Information About Wildfire Evacuation Procedures and Other Natural Disasters

The safety of your campers and staff and anyone who may be on your property are your primary responsibility. Review your risk management plan for camp evacuation and emergency procedures to coordinate with appropriate local authorities.

Informative resources can be found on the ACA Web site that offer tips for dealing with disaster situations at www.ACAcamps.org/inside/news/disasters.php.

Business Resources

ACA Can Save Your Camp Money . . . and It's NOT Too Late for THIS Summer!

The new ACA/Consorta program is saving camps BIG money off of food costs, maintenance, building and office supplies, etc. BUT DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT. [Sign up for our new program](#) and experience it for yourself. Your bottom line will be glad you did.

Look at the average savings

Food – 17% (Sysco, Gordon Foods, FoodSource Plus)

Office Supplies – 20%

Maintenance Supplies – 10% to 25%

And More!!!!

[Sign up today](#) and receive access to the exclusive ACA Purchasing Point Web site. Designed to help you save! Contact your ACA Business Development Team: Tim Millbern, 765-349-3517; Kim Bruno 765-349-3309; or Paula McCarns 765-349-3319

Camp News

CYO Camp and Retreat Center Appoints New Executive Director

Catholic Charities CYO (CCCYO) appointed Jim Willford as the agency's executive director of CYO Camp and Retreat Center located in Occidental, California. Willford has a rich background in inner city teaching, and camp programming and management. Most recently, he served as the executive director of YMCA Storer Camps, a large summer camp and year-round environmental education and retreat center. Previously, Willford spent fifteen years as an elementary school teacher in Toledo, Ohio and Los Angeles, California, where he taught at a bilingual, inner city school.

Child and Youth Development Resources

New Study Looks at Peer Pressure and Adolescent Substance Abuse

A new study by [researchers from Weill Cornell Medical College](#) shows that competence skills can reduce adolescent substance use over the long term, even when friends smoke or use alcohol.

Previous research has shown that friends' substance use is one of the most powerful influences that lead adolescents to use themselves. Recent studies have focused on the role of competence skills, which include good self-management and positive psychological characteristics. These skills could protect young people from social risk factors for using substances.

The study, published in the April issue of the journal Addictive Behaviors, specifically looked at the skills of high refusal assertiveness (positive responses to questions like "Do you say 'no' when someone asks you to smoke") and sound decision-making skills (positive responses to questions like "When I have a problem I think about which of the alternatives are best").

Video Gaming Displaces Physical Activity for Children and Youth

According to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) child and adolescent psychiatrists are concerned about children who spend more than two hours playing video games each day.

The AACAP cautions that exposure to violent video games can elevate aggressive feelings and thoughts, especially in children and adolescents. In addition, spending large amounts of time playing these games can create problems and lead to:

- Poor social skills
- Time away from family, school-work, and other hobbies
- Lower grades and reading less
- Lack of exercise and obesity

For more information, visit www.aacap.org.